



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH
1102 SE Quince Street • PO Box 47990
Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

February 2, 2004

The Honorable Dave Quall, Chair
House Education Committee
John L. O'Brien Building
2nd Floor, Room 232-B
Post Office Box 40600
Olympia, Washington 98504-0600

Dear Representative Quall:

We are writing to share the Board's support for House Bill 3110, scheduled for public hearing before your committee on February 2.

There is a clear need for stable, ongoing funding of emergency school repairs and renovation projects:

- The Board has heard from students, parents, teachers, local and state health department staff, and school district staff about indoor air quality concerns resulting from school facilities in need of repair.
- The Washington Attorney General's Office has documented school construction problems in "Administrative Recommendations: Investigation of School Construction and Electrical Licensing Activities (Eastern Washington and Clark County)," a September 25, 1996 memorandum.
- The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction received applications for the one-time federal emergency repair and renovation funds from 43 percent of school districts that describe repair and renovation needs across the state (please see <http://www.k12.wa.us/SchFacilities/ESRR.aspx#ProjInfo>).

The Board responded to citizen concerns and evidence that school indoor air quality problems are a statewide health and safety issue, by reviewing the Board's school environmental health rule, chapter 246-366 WAC, and deciding to begin a rule revision process in July 2004. During the rule review, concerned citizens, state and local health department staffs, school district staffs, and representatives of other organizations expressed the need for clearer rules, and also the need for stable funding for quality school construction, repairs and renovations. As indicated in HB 3110, this funding is especially needed for high poverty school districts, and districts that have not passed levies for this type of funding.

The Board recommends that the Legislature designate funding for a school health and safety repair program, to assist OSPI, the State Board of Education, and school district superintendents and board in establishing an ongoing program (please see the full list of recommendations and background information at http://www.sboh.wa.gov/Meetings%202003/2003-01_08/Tab10_SchoolIAQ_MemoRevised.pdf). We hope that the sources of funding designated in HB 3110 are adequate to address existing needs, and thereby provide Washington's children and teachers with healthier and safer learning environments.

Sincerely,

Linda Lake
Chair, Washington State Board
of Health

Carl Osaki
Chair, WSOBH Environmental
Health Committee

Dr. Ed Gray
Washington State Board of
Health Member

cc: House Education Committee Members
Washington State Board of Health Members
Mich'l Prentice Needham, Governor's Office of Health Policy
Terry Bergeson, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Steve Meyer, Department of Health